
JOURNAL

OF THE

RHODEISLAND INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION.

The JOURNAL OF THE RHODE-ISLAND INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION will be published on the 1st and 15th of every month, until a volume is completed by the publication of twelve numbers.

Each number will contain at least sixteen pages in octavo form: and in addition, from time to time, an EXTRA will be published, containing official circulars, notices of school meetings, and communications respecting individual schools, and improvements in education generally; and one of a series of "*Educational Tracts*," devoted to the discussion of important topics, in some one department of popular education.

The volume, including the EXTRAS and "*Educational Tracts*," will constitute at least three hundred pages, and will be furnished for fifty cents for a single copy; or for three dollars for ten copies sent in a single package; and at the same rate for any larger number sent in the same way.

The subscription must be paid on the reception of the first number.

HENRY BARNARD, Commissioner of Public Schools, Editor.

THOMAS C. HARTSHORN, Business Agent.

PROVIDENCE, March 16, 1846.

PROGRESS OF EDUCATION IN OTHER STATES.

We continue our extracts from various official documents, showing the condition and prospects of public schools in other states, where this subject has received, or is now receiving particular attention.

NEW YORK.—Continued.

STATE NORMAL SCHOOL AT ALBANY.

Extracts from the Annual "Report of the Executive Committee of the State Normal School, January, 14, 1846."

Building and accommodations.—In the building which the city of Albany had placed at the disposal of the committee, eight rooms have been fitted up for the exclusive use of the Normal School, viz: two study rooms, four recitation rooms, a lecture room, and one apartment for the library and apparatus. The study rooms are provided with comfortable desks and seats, affording accommodation for about two hundred pupils. Males and females occupy the same rooms, the latter being seated in front, next to the desk of the teacher, while the males are placed immediately in the rear of them. Each study room has a clock, which is indispensable wherever punctuality is so much insisted on as it is at the Normal School. The lecture room is a commodious apartment which will seat three hundred and fifty persons. These eight rooms are in constant use as recitation rooms, and are all provided with large black-boards.

Statistics showing the progress of the school.—The first term began December 18th, 1844, with twenty-nine (thirteen males and sixteen females,) pupils, and closed March 11th, 1845, with ninety-eight pupils, sixty-nine of whom were "State Pupils," selected by the County Superintendents, who received a weekly allowance of money, (females \$1 25, and males \$1 00,) towards their board, and the rest were "Volunteers," who were admitted on examination, and received tuition and the use of text books free of expense.

The second term commenced April 9th, with one hundred and seventy pupils, and closed August 27th, with one hundred and eighty-five pupils, (one hundred and nineteen "State Pupils," and sixty-six "Volunteers.") More than nine-tenths had been teachers. The allowance to each State pupil was \$1 00. Thirty-four at the close of the term, completed the course of instruction and received a diploma.

The third term commenced October 15th, with one hundred and eighty pupils, and has now increased to one hundred and ninety-seven, one-half of whom are females, and one hundred and twenty-two "State Pupils," (who receive seventy-five cents per week,) and seventy-five "Volunteers." All but twenty-one have taught before. Every county is represented. Provision will be made next term for two hundred and fifty-six pupils, to be selected from the counties according to the ratio of representation, and each will receive an allowance sufficient to meet the travelling expenses to and from the school.

Pledge to teach—All the pupils on entering the school are required to sign the following declaration.

"We the subscribers hereby declare, that it is our intention to devote ourselves to the business of teaching district schools, and that our sole object in resorting to this Normal School is the better to prepare ourselves for that important duty."

The committee felt themselves imperatively bound to guard the trust committed to them from abuse. The design of the Legislature was not to endow an institution, whither any or all might resort, who desired to obtain a solid education; the act expressly declares, that it was founded "for the instruction and practice of teachers of common schools in the science of education and in the art of teaching. The end of the law would therefore have been defeated, if the doors of the school had been thrown open to any who would enter. This consideration induced the committee to demand the above pledge, which they wished to make as stringent as possible. And it gives them pleasure to state, that they have not the shadow of a reason for doubting the honesty of the pupils who have signed it. It may also be stated here, that of the thirty-four graduates of the school, thirty-three are actually engaged in common schools, and one is fulfilling the duties of a county superintendent.

Organization and instruction.—The school was opened under David P. Page, of Newburyport, Mass., as Principal, and George R. Perkins, of Utica, Professor of Mathematics, and instructors in music and drawing. Their first object was to imbue their pupils with a sense of the *importance of the teacher's work*, and of the necessity of high qualifications for the successful discharge of a teacher's duty.

To accomplish this a course of lectures was at once commenced by the Principal, on the "Responsibilities of the Teacher;" the "Habits of the Teacher;" "Modes of Teaching;" "Modes of Government;" "Qualifications of the Teacher;" "Securing Parental Co-operation;" "Waking up Mind in School, and in the District;" "Motives to be addressed," &c. &c.

A very commendable spirit soon manifested itself in the school, in the *teachableness* of the pupils. It was found that the most of them were willing to descend again to first principles, and to lay anew the foundation stones of a good education. Thus, too, the way was prepared for the classification of the students, a duty always difficult and often unpleasant for the teacher, especially when the pupil shows an unwillingness to take his proper place, thinking more favorably than his teachers of his own proficiency. But the influence of these lectures carried the majority of the students to the extreme, the opposite of self-confidence, for they seemed to feel that they had every thing to learn, and they were willing to be classed among those who were to acquire the elements of knowledge.

When the way was thus prepared for labor, the instructors, to make themselves useful to the school, relied mainly upon *actual teaching and thorough drilling*. The classes were soon formed, and the elementary branches thoroughly taught, and at every step with a special reference to the manner of teaching them again in the district school.

The teachers had no desire to introduce *novelties* or extraordinary methods to the attention of the school. It was their desire rather to bring before them such

methods, as their own experience had proved to be most useful. "Not how much, but how well," was one of their mottos, and "Books are but helps," was another. They endeavored to awaken an interest in the *subjects* treated upon, while books were regarded only as instruments. Above all, it was kept steadily before the minds of the student that he was *receiving*, that he might again *dis-pense*; hence the question was so often asked, "How would you explain that to a child?" that it was not unfrequently anticipated by the reciter; who would say, "If I were teaching a class, I would explain it thus."

Much time was spent during the first term upon the common branches—reading, spelling, writing, geography, arithmetic and grammar. For it was soon discovered, that in the various schools, where these pupils had been educated, these branches—the first two especially—had been almost entirely neglected for the pursuit of the *higher branches*. Many had studied philosophy, whose *spelling was deficient*; and others had studied algebra, who found it very difficult to explain intelligibly the mystery of "*borrowing ten and carrying one*" in simple subtraction. And yet a large number of these pupils had been engaged in teaching the district schools of the state.

It was therefore believed, that the usefulness of the Normal School would be best promoted by at once directing attention to these *little things*. Reading and spelling became therefore daily exercises, and were conducted with special reference to the manner of teaching these branches most thoroughly in district schools.

In teaching reading it was thought of the utmost importance, to break up the mechanical mode in which it is too often taught in the schools. Reading, it was believed, had its rules and reasons and principles, as much as any other branch of study, and the point sought was to lay hold of these principles and to develop them—in other words—to teach reading philosophically, and not mechanically. This was attempted and prosecuted by Mr. Page in the following manner. It is well known that there are about *forty elementary sounds* in our language. The first step therefore was, to teach every pupil the utterance of these sounds. For this purpose a *chart* was prepared with much care by the Principal, upon which these sounds were indicated by their *most common representatives*. After this, the less frequent representatives were explained under the name of *equivalents*. When the students were able to give perfect utterance to the "simple elements," they were next exercised upon a series of combinations of these elements, until many of the most difficult in our language were mastered. Thus words were analyzed into their elements, and the elements again combined into words; and then the whole was applied to the reading lessons. The effect upon the tones of the voice, and upon articulation was speedily obvious to all. When perfect utterance was acquired—the first essential step toward good reading or speaking—then the inflections and modulations of the voice, pauses and emphasis, quantity and force, in a word, all those nicer variations, attention to which make the perfect reader, were not neglected.

No unimportant part of the instruction in reading, was that devoted to giving an idea of the *best methods of teaching children to read*. Here, instruction in the elementary sounds at a very early stage of the child's progress was earnestly urged.

Spelling was taught to a considerable extent by the use of the slate. It was believed that *oral* spelling had been too much relied on in district schools; and the evil of such exclusive reliance is apparent from the fact, that good oral spellers frequently commit mistakes, when called on to write. Various methods were therefore practised, not only with the view of immediately benefiting the pupils, but also to furnish them with the means of securing an interest in this important branch of education, when they were called to teach.

In teaching geography, the great aim was, to fix in the mind of the pupil an idea of the shape, extent and general features of a country; the character of the surface, as level, undulating, hilly or mountainous; the course and extent of the mountains, the basins or great reservoirs for the streams of the uplands; the position of the cities; the canals, railroads, &c. To accomplish this, the students were required to draw at home an outline map of the country, delineating, as far as possible, these general features. And from the instruction in drawing, which had been imparted, the students executed this task with much accuracy and even beauty. Then in the class, they were required to draw, *from memory*

the same map upon the black-board, which after some practice, they were able to do with despatch. After this, they recited, somewhat in the form of a lecture, all the information which they had acquired concerning the history of the country, including the form of government, language, religion, laws, customs and remarkable events. At this point, the teacher, either by questioning the other pupils, or by his own statements, corrected mistakes, or communicated such additional information, as he deemed to be important.

A very thorough course of lectures was also delivered by the professor of mathematics, on the use of the globes and on mathematical geography, in which many of the elementary principles of astronomy were appropriately introduced.

In commencing the mathematical course, it was thought that *thoroughness* alone could secure a pleasant and profitable progress. To gain this, instruction commenced at the fundamental principles of arithmetic. The students were required to solve *orally* and without the aid of a book, all the questions in "Colburn's Intellectual Arithmetic." After the attainment of considerable proficiency in this exercise, they were allowed to propose to each other, such questions as involved the principles already acquired. This gave additional interest to the subject of study; while the brevity and clearness displayed in stating the questions, and the facility and ingenuity in solving them, clearly proved, that the students were making not only a thorough but rapid advancement.

In teaching written arithmetic, great care was taken that the principles on which the rules were grounded, should be fully comprehended. To this end, the pupils were required to go to the black-board, and taking the position of a teacher, to go carefully through the analysis of each topic; while any member of the class was permitted to point out whatever he deemed incorrect or defective, and the *temporary* teacher was called on to defend his course, or to correct his mistake. Thus rigid criticism was encouraged, and no subject was dismissed, until it was so well understood, that any of the class could act the part of a teacher, and explain it at the black-board. Frequently several members of the class were called on in succession to elucidate the same subject; thus affording an opportunity for comparing the relative merits of various methods.

The same course was pursued in algebra and geometry.

In order to be certain that the instruction was thorough, frequent reviews were required; and the maxim was continually repeated "not how much, but how well."

After all the elementary studies were thus reviewed, some of the higher branches were taken up. Among the number were natural philosophy and human physiology, besides higher arithmetic and algebra, of which mention has been already made. Composition and declamation were also regularly attended to.

Vocal music has been taught elementarily, so as to prepare the pupils for teaching it to others in a proper manner. Care has also been taken to familiarize the students with many of the little songs adapted to childhood, in order that the graduates may be able to carry into their schools such music as shall be attractive to the young.

Drawing, also, it was thought, ought to be taught to all children, no less for its direct utility than for the influence it would have in the cultivation of all their powers, by disciplining the eye, improving the taste, and by awakening the observation both of natural and artificial forms. Besides, a knowledge of drawing greatly facilitates an instructor's *power to teach*; and in the absence of apparatus, it is his only way of addressing the eye.

Sub Lecture Exercises.—The course of instruction during the second term did not materially differ from that pursued before. Experience of course suggested some modifications, and among these was the introduction of what is familiarly called the "Sub Lecture Exercise." Shortly after the middle of the term, a demand was made by the county superintendents, for teachers who should assist in the county institutes, which were to be convened during the approaching vacation of the Normal School. In order therefore to prepare the students for this duty, by improving their *ability of communicating* their knowledge, the "sub lectures" were introduced. Some fifteen of the more advanced pupils were appointed weekly, who were expected to prepare themselves to elucidate a given topic on the following Wednesday. The pupil, in the presence of the whole school, was then required to assume the attitude of a teacher, and by means of diagrams on the black-board, &c., to explain, as best he could, the par-

ticular point assigned. The lecture of each pupil was limited to six minutes, and when each had performed his duty, his *matter, manner* and style were criticised by the Principal. The improvement observable from week to week, showed this exercise to be one of no small importance.

Board of Instruction.—David P. Page, *Principal*. George R. Perkins, A. M., *Professor of Mathematics*. Darwin G. Eaton, *Teacher of Mathematics, &c.* Sumner C. Webb, *Teacher of Arithmetic and Geography*. Silas T. Bowen, *Teacher of Grammar*. W. W. Clark, *Teacher of Natural Philosophy and Chemistry*. Elizabeth C. Hance, *Teacher of Reading and History*. William F. Phelps, *Permanent Teacher of the Model School*. F. I. Hsley, *Teacher of Vocal Music*. J. B. Howard, *Teacher of Drawing*.

The number of the pupils having increased so much, a modification of the duties of the Principal was imperatively required. A general supervision of the teachers is necessary, and this could not be exercised, so long as the Principal was confined during all the school hours, engaged in actual teaching. At the first, necessity required his services in the recitation room, but it was even then felt to be an evil, which ought to be corrected as soon as possible. Accordingly his duties as an actual teacher have been somewhat lightened, and a portion of every day is spent by him, in visiting the classes taught by the assistants.

Institute Exercise.—In addition to the Wednesday "sub lectures," some of the more advanced classes spend an hour each week, in what is denominated an "Institute Exercise." Three or four persons are designated, who having prepared themselves, take the place of *Institute Teachers*; thus a facility is acquired in performing an important service which will be expected of them when they graduate.

Weekly Discussions.—There are also in the school, several associations which meet every Saturday, for the purpose of discussing the duties of the teacher, the best modes of discipline, and the means of elevating the profession of the teacher, so that it may become worthy of the public respect; it is believed that these associations are exerting a salutary influence.

Punctuality and System.—Punctuality is esteemed essential for the teacher, who wishes to preserve his own self-respect, or to be useful to his pupils; its observance has therefore been earnestly urged upon all, both by precept and example; and the Normal School affords an example of the ease with which punctuality may be observed in a school, by teachers being punctual themselves. The Normal School teachers are never "behind the time."

Success also in a school depends much upon adherence to *system* in all its arrangements and exercises. The rule of the Normal School is, that there is "a time for every thing, and every thing must be in its time."

Discipline.—It was thought best to have *few laws*. The *wish of the Principal*, kindly expressed, has been the law of the school, while the good intention and ever ready compliance on the part of the pupils, to that wish, has made the discipline of the school an honor to teachers and students, and a gratification to all who have witnessed it.

Library.—In the report of last year, it was stated, "that a donation for an educational library has been made to the Normal School, by the executors of the Hon. James Wadsworth, out of certain funds left by that distinguished friend of education, to be disbursed in such manner as would best promote the interests of the schools of the people." This valuable donation has been received, and composes the principal part of the "Miscellaneous Library," which now numbers 601 volumes.

The expense of the school, in the purchase of text books, has also been much lessened by the liberality of publishers. The number of volumes in the "Text Book Library," is 5,005. The number of volumes in both libraries is 5,606.

Experimental School.—During the second term, an experimental school was opened, consisting of forty-five children between the ages of five and sixteen years. This school was taught during that term by the graduating class, who went in *by turns* for that purpose.

The design of this school is, to afford the Normal pupils an opportunity, under the eye of the Principal, to practice the methods of teaching inculcated in the instructions which they have received. They spend two weeks each in the school. The first week, they act *as observers*, and the second as teachers. As

observers, it is their duty to notice closely the mode of discipline, teaching, &c.; also at every recitation to keep the "class book," and to mark therein the manner in which every child recites his lesson. The second week, the observers become teachers, and new pupils come in from the Normal School, to take the place of observers.

Uniformity of instruction and government is secured by the appointment of one of the graduates of the Normal School, as a *permanent teacher*. It is his duty to keep the school well classified and in good order; to give occasional specimens of teaching, and to make such suggestions to the teachers as he shall think proper.

It is proposed to open shortly another experimental school, the city of Albany having agreed to pay \$200 for fitting up and furnishing the room. Both the schools will be under the supervision of the "*Permanent Teacher*," while more ample opportunity for practice in teaching will be afforded to the Normal pupils.

Hitherto the instruction in the experimental school has been gratuitous, but it is the purpose of the committee, hereafter to charge those who are able to pay a tuition fee; thus it is intended, that the schools shall defray their own expenses. An idea of the organization and management of this school, may be obtained from the "suggestions in aid of the experimental school."

"The care of this school has been placed under a permanent teacher, whose duty it shall be to govern, classify and arrange the school according to his best judgment.

He is to be aided, in the work of instruction and carrying out of his plans, by two "*teachers*" and two "*visitors*" each week; it being understood that the "*visitors*" of one week shall become the "*teachers*" for the next.

In order to make this school as useful as possible both to the teachers and the taught, the following suggestions are submitted to those who may be called upon to take part in its instruction, in the hope that they will be rigidly observed.

"1. That you be in the school-room promptly at *twenty minutes before 9 A. M.*, every day during your stay in the school, in readiness to attend to any duties that may be assigned you.

2. That you thoroughly *prepare* yourselves for your work while here, examine every lesson before you meet your classes, and thus be enabled to conduct the exercises with animation and interest.

3. That you take special pains to interest yourselves in behalf of the school; that you study to promote its welfare, as if its prosperity and usefulness depended entirely upon your own exertions.

4. That you be prepared, during your week of service, to present at least one "*topic exercise*" of not less than five minutes in length.

5. That you be rigidly thorough in every thing you teach, bearing in mind our motto: "*not how much, but how well.*"

6. That your intercourse with the pupils be characterized by kindness and calmness, and at the same time by firmness and decision.

7. That you punctually attend every meeting appointed for the purpose of conferring on matters relating to the school.

8. That while the *general* direction and government of the school is left with the permanent teacher, you consider yourselves responsible for the deportment of pupils during class exercises, as well as for their scholarship and progress while under your charge.

9. That all cases of disobedience or misconduct of any kind, be promptly reported to the permanent teacher.

10. That you keep in mind constantly the object for which this school was established, and that your own fitness, for the duties of the teacher's responsible office, may, in a great measure, be determined by your course of proceeding while here."

The "*visitors*" are expected to keep a faithful record of the recitations and deportment of each pupil in the classes they attend, and thus endeavor during the week to learn the name and attainments of each scholar. They should strive to make themselves quite familiar with all the operations of the school, that they may be the better prepared for the duties of the *second week*.

It is also the duty of the "*visitors*," to regard the deportment of the pupils at recess. To this end, it is desirable they should be among the scholars, most of

the time at recess, in order to direct their sports or to restrain any noise or disorder, that would be improper or inconvenient to the Normal School.

Those who enter upon their duties as "*visitors*," are requested *carefully to read these suggestions during the first morning*, and to conform to them as faithfully as possible during their whole stay in the school."

Prospects of the Normal School.—But is there a reasonable prospect that the Normal School, as an educational scheme, will be more successful than the plans which have preceded it? To this it is answered, that if the school continues under the charge of teachers, every way so competent as the present instructors, and if fostered by the Legislature, it cannot fail. And the committee feel justified in speaking strongly, from the success that has already crowned the effort. The minds of the pupils have been aroused, and they have labored with most commendable zeal in the acquisition of knowledge and of the best modes of imparting instruction. No one can enter the recitation rooms of the Normal School without feeling, that teachers and taught are *in earnest*, that here there is no child's play. Of nearly all the thirty-four graduates who have gone forth from the school, it may be affirmed, that their educational fabric is granite from the base to the top stone. And those who occupy the seats during the present term, are busily engaged in quarrying, polishing and laying the same solid material.

Nothing in the school makes so strong an impression upon the minds of visitors, as the display of a determined purpose on the part of the students, to get at the truth upon every subject of study. Implicit faith in the dicta of a teacher is not an article in the educational creed of the Normal School, and the instructors are doing their utmost that it may never become so. At recitation the pupil has the privilege of stating his difficulties and doubts, and even his objections, and the subject under consideration is not passed until it is thoroughly sifted. The committee watched with deep interest, and not without apprehension, this feature in the system of instruction of Messrs Page and Perkins. At first they feared, lest the teachers might, sooner or later, be placed in an awkward dilemma, and be found wanting on some point; for nothing is truer, than that a person of ordinary capacity may ask a question, which a wiser man *ought*, and yet may *not* be able to answer. But the committee did not then know the teachers of the Normal School as well as they now do; and indeed all apprehension on this point was dispelled before the close of the first term. Before leaving this topic, it may, however, be well to remark, that the daily ordeal of questioning through which the instructors and their assistants pass, is one, to say the least, to which the executive committee would not like to be exposed. A distinguished officer in one of our colleges, upon his visit to the school, remarked that "it would not be safe to expose our college professors to such a trial," and he suggested that the privilege of questioning ought to be much curtailed, for there was danger of placing the teachers in an unpleasant position. But confidence has so completely supplanted fear in the minds of the committee, that the suggestion of the professor is not likely to be soon adopted.

The committee would therefore state their strong conviction that this gratifying state of interest and effort, as witnessed in the school, has been caused by the *excellence of the Normal system, efficiently carried out.*

And if such has been the result of the first year, why may not each succeeding one witness the same or even greater results? In the first year of any enterprise, much time is necessarily spent in planning and arranging, but when the arrangements have been completed, and the whole time is devoted to the purpose proposed in the institution, greater results may be confidently expected, than could be in its incipient stages.

As to the influence which the school shall exert upon the standing of teachers, and the cause of education, the community must judge. The committee believe, however, that those who are thoroughly trained with reference to teaching, who have the methods of teaching and the means of exciting an interest in the young, must be more successful than those, who enter the schools without thought, and who, having nothing to guide them but a sort of extemporaneous impulse, are nearly as likely to go wrong as right.

It is believed, too, that the *indirect* influence of the school will be salutary. Wherever a Normal pupil is employed to teach, there will be a large circle of other teachers incited to effort to be his equals, who otherwise might never have

been roused to any extraordinary exertion. A few poor teachers, indeed, conscious of their own inferiority, will be moved to oppose the school and denounce the system of instruction, which they cannot hope to emulate; but the majority will desire improvement, and be glad to take the hints which they can gather from any good example around them. On this point the institutes, which were held during the last autumn, may be cited as proof. In several of the counties, the graduates of the school officiated by request as teachers. So far as heard from, their reception was most gratifying. They not only did not excite any untoward jealousies, but gained largely upon the confidence and good will of the teachers assembled.

Copy of the Diploma of the State Normal School.

Albany, N. Y. 184 .

This certifies that A. B. has been a member of the State Normal School months, and that he is judged by the Faculty of the institution to be well qualified to engage in the duties of a teacher.

(Signed,)

*Principal,
Prof. Math.*

To whom it may concern :

In consideration of the above certificate, the undersigned, the executive committee, hereby recommend the said A. B. as a worthy graduate of the State Normal School.

(Signed,)

*} Executive
Committee.*

*State of New York,
Done at Albany, 184 .*

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PENNSYLVANIA.

ELEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS, FOR THE YEAR ENDING JUNE 3, 1844, p. 57.

DO. FOR 1845, p. 12.

The report last cited does not throw much light on the practical working of the school system of Pennsylvania, beyond its financial statistics. We will however make some extracts from this, and the report for 1844, by Mr. McClure, which goes more into detail.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM.

Every township, ward or borough in the commonwealth, not within the city and incorporated districts of the county of Philadelphia, forms a separate school district, except in a few instances where, by special act of the Legislature, a township is divided into two districts. Each district has a board of school directors, consisting of six members, two of whom are elected annually. The directors are authorized, if they deem it expedient, to divide the district into sub-districts, with power to elect a primary committee of three in each, who act as a committee of the board, to attend to the local affairs of their respective sub-districts, subject to the orders of the board. In wards and boroughs the directors may appoint an inspector, who devotes his attention to the "visitation, inspection, and care of the schools." Neither the directors, their treasurer, nor the primary committees, receive any pay or emolument whatever for their services as such. It will thus be seen, that each district forms a distinct and independent organization, represented by the board of directors, having no connection with the township or county officers; the only other officer being the Secretary of the Commonwealth, who is ex-officio Superintendent of Common Schools.

Each board of directors is required, by one or more of their number, to visit every school within their district at least once in every month, and to cause the result of said visit to be entered on the minutes of the board. And on the first Monday of June, annually, they are required to make a report to the Superintendent, setting forth the progress and condition of the schools, the expenses incurred in maintain-

ing them, together with such other information as may be of use in forming a just estimate of the value of common schools.

The district reports, which at present constitute the principal, and almost the only means of ascertaining the condition of the schools throughout the state, have been pretty generally received.

CONDITION OF THE SCHOOLS IN 1844-5.

Number of accepting districts, 1,189. Number of schools, 6,690. Average length of school term, four months. Number of teachers, 8,031. Average salaries of male teachers per month, \$16 47. Average salaries of female teachers per month, \$9 46. Number of scholars, 327,418. Average number in each school, forty-four. State appropriation to accepting districts \$191,177 10. Amount raised by tax in accepting districts \$370,774 15. These statistics do not include Philadelphia, which were as follows in 1844.

Schools in Philadelphia.—The city and county of Philadelphia compose one district, known as the first school district. The provisions for general education in this district vary considerably from those in the other districts of the state. As in the latter, however, the funds for their support are derived from a tax levied in the district, and from the state appropriation—and the general regulation of the schools is entrusted to persons elected by the people for that purpose. The schools at present are in a most flourishing condition.

The Central High School is an admirable feature in the system, no less for the influence it exerts over the primary and secondary schools, than for its superior methods of instruction. The hope of admission to this school, which it is known depends entirely on his personal merits, affords to every boy, rich or poor, in the district, a powerful stimulus to unwearied exertion. And at the same time a wholesome emulation is kept up among the teachers of these schools as to which shall furnish the greatest number of successful candidates.

The buildings and public property are all insured; and the real estate held in trust by the county of Philadelphia, for public school purposes, including lots, buildings, furniture, &c. which in many instances has become worth much more than the original cost, may be fairly estimated at over \$600,000.

The number of the schools in the district is 217, of which one is the High School; forty-two are grammar schools; nineteen secondary; seventy-eight primary, and seventy-seven unclassified. The whole number of teachers, including the professors of the High School, is 526, of whom eighty-four are males, and four hundred and forty-two females, and the average compensation of each, is \$263 27. The whole number of scholars is 33,299; of whom 16,964 are males, and 16,335 females. The aggregate amount paid for tuition is \$138,484; the aggregate amount for contingent expenses, not including those for real estate and school furniture, is \$62,738 96. These two sums divided by 33,299, (the whole number of scholars,) give the average cost of tuition, \$4 15; average cost of contingent expenses, \$1 80.

HISTORY OF THE STATE APPROPRIATIONS FOR SUPPORT OF SCHOOLS.

A common school fund was first established in this state by the act of April 2d, 1831. By that act, certain moneys arising from the sale of lands, and other sources, were set apart for a common school fund, to be held by the Commonwealth, for the use of said fund, at an interest of five per cent. The interest was directed to be added to the principal, until the proceeds thereof should amount to one hundred thousand dollars annually, when the whole was to be applied to the support of common schools.

By the act of April 1st, 1834, seventy-five thousand dollars were ordered to be paid out of the school fund for the year 1835, and annually thereafter, to be distributed among the several counties that should entitle themselves to it under the provisions of that act. The portion due each county was deposited in the respective county treasuries, to be paid out to the accepting districts in each county. The appropriation of 1835 was paid to whatever districts in the county adopted the system; those that refused to adopt thereby forfeiting their share. But under the act of June 13th, 1836, the appropriation for that year, due to the non-accepting districts, was to be retained in the county treasury, for their use, for any term not exceeding one year, from the 1st of November, 1837.

By the act of June 13th, 1836, one hundred thousand dollars, in addition to the one hundred thousand dollars payable by the United States Bank, were appropria-

ted to common schools, for the school year of 1837, which was made to commence on the first Monday of June following. These two hundred thousand dollars, instead of being deposited in the county treasuries, like the appropriations of the two preceding years, were to remain in the state treasury, subject to the drafts of the Superintendent; and warrants for the payment thereof were to be issued by him in favor of such districts as should entitle themselves to the same, by adopting the system and levying a school tax *not less than equal to, nor more than treble, their portion of the appropriation under this act.*

The money was thus to be paid to each district, directly out of the state treasury, without, as before, passing through the county treasury.

By resolution of April 3d, 1837, the sum of \$500,000 was appropriated to common schools for the year 1838, to be expended either in building or in defraying the expenses of tuition.

On the 12th of April, 1838, the school appropriation was increased to a sum equal to one dollar for every taxable inhabitant in the Commonwealth, and was to increase triennially, with the increase of inhabitants, so as always to equal one dollar per taxable, but without any increase of taxation above that mentioned in the act of 1836. That is, agreeably to the construction heretofore given, however much the number of taxables might increase, the tax should not exceed treble the district's portion of \$200,000, if that sum were divided among the number of taxables in the state at the time being; and a sum equal to that share should entitle a district to the state appropriation.

On the 29th of September, 1843, the bill appropriating \$250,000 to common schools, for the school year 1844, received the signature of the Governor, and became a law. As the school year, however, had commenced on the first Monday of June previous, about seven-eighths of the districts had been paid, under the act of 1838, at the rate of one dollar per taxable, before the date of the former act. Those that drew their appropriation between that time and the close of the school year, were paid at the same rate. This will account for the sum paid this year, being greater than what was appropriated—nearly all the districts having been paid under the act of 1838, before that of the 29th of September took effect.

By the act of the 31st of May last, the sum of \$200,000 was appropriated to common school purposes, for the school year of 1845; and the Superintendent was directed to make the apportionment among the accepting districts only, and in such a way as not to exceed the sum appropriated.

LENGTH OF SCHOOL.

It is customary in many, perhaps a majority of the districts, when the public schools have closed, to open a private or subscription school, at which most of the children are enabled to attend. In this way the amount of schooling is much greater than appears in the report, as it is only the period taught in the public schools, or under the general system, that is reported by the directors. There is also a custom in some places, for the inhabitants of a *sub-district* to unite the public funds with private subscriptions. The amount subscribed is not given to the teacher in addition to his usual salary, but united with the sub-district's share of the tax and state appropriation, thus enabling the public schools to be kept open for a greater length of time in that sub-district. Both these practices, (particularly the one last mentioned,) would be highly commendable, were there not danger that it will lessen the interest felt in the schools of the district at large. A strenuous effort should first be made by those favorable to the continuance of the schools, to have an additional tax levied on the whole district, in the manner prescribed in the fourth section of the act of 1836; the sub-districts that consider themselves unable to subscribe for the support of a school will then share in the common benefit, while it will occasion but little additional expense to the others.

IRREGULARITY OF ATTENDANCE.

Irregularity in the attendance of the scholars is a deplorable evil in our schools. It is impossible with our present imperfect methods of reporting to arrive at correct information as to the extent of the evil, but sufficient is known to show that until a reform takes place it will prove a lamentable drawback on the efficiency of the schools. Next to the want of uniform text books of the proper kind, the teacher meets with no greater obstacle than this irregularity. It defies all attempts at forming or preserving classes, and compels him to devote that time and attention to a single scholar, which, if the attendance were regular and the classification com-

plete, might with equal ease be devoted to a dozen. It is impossible for the pupil to make any progress while suffering such constant interruption. It destroys his interest in his studies, dissipates his mind, and disqualifies him for concentrating his attention on the subject before him. He must necessarily forget on one day what he learnt the preceding—he becomes discouraged on finding himself unable to keep pace with his class—and which is more than all, he learns a habit of irregularity and inattention, which must adhere to him through life, and prove a most serious obstacle to his future success. At present I see no way of remedying the evil, except through the united efforts of parents and teachers.

FEMALE TEACHERS.

In his last report, the undersigned took occasion to remark on the advantages which females possess over the other sex as instructors of small children, such as the schools in summer are generally composed of, and also, that in consequence of their expenses for board, &c. being less, they could afford to teach for a smaller salary than men of the same literary qualifications. For these, and other reasons, he ventured to recommend their more frequent employment as teachers. He is now gratified at being able to state, that the proportion of female teachers is rapidly increasing, being considerably greater, in proportion to the number of male teachers, than it was last year.

COMMON SCHOOL JOURNAL.

It was stated in the last annual report, that there was about to be established in Philadelphia, a monthly paper, with the above title, under the editorial care of Prof. Hart, principal of the Central High School. The first number of the Journal was issued in January last, and its publication has been continued to the present time. It has realized all that was anticipated from the high character of its editor, for learning and zeal, in the cause of education. As a means for conveying to the public correct views on the subject of education—for aiding directors and teachers in the performance of their duties, by communicating information connected with the schools, which cannot be so readily derived from any other source—and for imparting valuable suggestions for improvement in every department of education, the Journal promises to be of the greatest utility.

But it is on account of the aid its general circulation would afford the Superintendent in the discharge of his official duties, that the Journal deserves special attention. The questions he is repeatedly called upon to answer, by the directors and others, in different parts of the State, are very often of the same nature—requiring the same answer. Under present circumstances, a separate letter has to be written in answer to each; and not unfrequently, fifty or a hundred letters are written in the course of a year, of precisely the same import. Now, the expense for postage and this laborious correspondence, might be in a great measure dispensed with, if each board of directors were in the receipt of a paper like the one here spoken of, which the Superintendent might employ as the channel of his official communications to the directors. Instead of being obliged, as at present, to forward a distinct reply, as often as the question is proposed, a single answer or decision, when published and circulated in this way, among the several boards of directors, would answer every purpose. The Journal would be a valuable auxiliary to the Superintendent in various other ways, as a medium for conveying notices or directions to the districts, which cannot be done at present, except by letters or printed circulars, for each occasion.

The Periodical thus deservedly commended to the patronage of the Legislature which it did not receive, was discontinued at the close of the first volume. The present superintendent has again called attention to the subject, with an intimation that Prof. Hart, will resume its publication, if sufficient encouragement is offered. We hope this able advocate of sound educational progress and reform will be brought fresh and strong into the field.

TEXT BOOKS.

The mischief arising from the endless variety of books used in our public schools, differing, as they do, in almost every district of the State, was alluded to in the last annual report of the Superintendent. It is much desired that some efficient means could be adopted to remedy this evil. The introduction into all the schools of the same and most approved series of school books, would greatly facilitate the object of teachers, and advance the cause of education. Impressed with the importance of this measure, the distinguished gentleman who preceded the undersigned as Superintendent, with much pains, prepared a catalogue of school books, which, in a letter addressed to the several boards of directors, he recommended to be used in the schools. In some instances the recommendation has been pursued, but in many of the districts it has not received that attention which its importance deserved. A lamentable want of uniformity still prevails, not only in the books of the same district, but in those of the same school; affording one of the greatest obstacles the teacher has to contend with in the classification and suitable training of his scholars. The question yet remains to be answered, how is this evil to be removed? It has occurred to the Superintendent, and he has been confirmed in his opinion by those with whom he has conversed on the subject, that the object could be best accomplished by a state convention of school directors, teachers, and friends of education generally.

STATE SUPERVISION.

The visitation of the schools, and those having the management of them, by one possessing the authority and intelligence requisite for an efficient performance of the duty, it is confidently believed would be attended with results the most beneficial. A full and correct knowledge of the progress of the system—of its adaptation to the purpose for which it is intended—of its defects and the proper remedies for them, cannot be acquired so well in any other manner as by personal interviews with the directors, teachers, and people of the district. By this mode, those having the care of the schools can be best directed in the performance of their official duties, controversies most effectually prevented or settled, and the people stimulated to a harmonious, intelligent, and energetic action in support of our system of general instruction.

Under the present arrangement, by which the Secretary of the Commonwealth is also the Superintendent of Common Schools, it is impracticable for him to visit the school districts. His information respecting the condition of the schools, and the operation of the system, is almost entirely derived from written correspondence with residents of the districts, and from the reports of the directors. These form but unsatisfactory sources of intelligence, and very inadequate for the attainment of the end desired. Evils the most pernicious in their influence on the schools may and doubtless do exist, of which the Superintendent receives no information. Inattention to the provisions of the laws, and misapprehensions of them, occasion difficulties and errors in the management of both the internal and external affairs of the schools, which cannot be properly ascertained and corrected by written correspondence. Where personal visits have been made by the present or former Superintendent, they have not failed to produce the most favorable effect.

It is therefore recommended, that so much of the tenth section of the act of 1836, as directs that the Secretary of the Commonwealth shall be Superintendent of Common Schools, should be repealed, and that provision should be made for the appointment of a Superintendent, whose official duties should be confined to those enumerated in the school laws. By this arrangement, the Superintendent would be enabled to devote that time and attention to the interests of the schools which their importance and welfare demand, but which, under present circumstances, the multifarious business of a double office prevents.

PROGRESS OF THE SYSTEM.

It appears from the statement here submitted that the schools of the Commonwealth are rapidly improving. Better modes of instruction are adopted and more capable teachers employed now than formerly. The number of scholars is annually increasing. The interest felt by the people in the cause of general education is becoming greater. Customs and prejudices that have existed for years, and furnished the greatest obstacles to the progress of the school system, are fast yielding to its benign influence; and districts before hostile, are year after year becoming reconciled, and voluntarily adopting its provisions. A knowledge

of their beneficial influences, and their happy conformity to the character of our citizens, and the principles of our government, secure for them the favor and support of the people. The system, with but little amendment, is well calculated to attain the object for which it was established. Its prosperity and existence rest with the Legislature. If, as heretofore, it shall continue to be aided and sustained by the fostering care of the Legislature, its progress to perfection and permanency cannot be doubted. But should an injudicious economy cause it to be neglected, and the support of the State withdrawn from it, but little hope can be entertained of the advancement of education in our Commonwealth.

During the most gloomy period every experienced in the financial concerns of the State, she has not failed to extend her aid to the advancement of her school system. When less than three years ago the holders of the permanent loans were loudest in their complaints, when the legislative hall was surrounded with domestic creditors, importunate in their demands for payment, when the business of the country was prostrated, the revenues of the State greatly diminished, and a pecuniary gloom hung over the affairs of the people and the Commonwealth, she still upheld, with an energetic hand, her system of general education. A mistaken economy should not, under present circumstances, induce her Legislature to withhold this support. Now that the claims of her domestic creditors have been satisfied, and her increasing revenues give every assurance of the speedy and complete redemption of her character and credit, now that the genial sun of prosperity is fast dissipating the cloud of embarrassment that enveloped her government and her citizens, surely it is not a time for Pennsylvania to give up her prosperous and popular system of common schools, and suffer it to fall into dilapidation and decay. While the governments of other states and countries are providing, by liberal appropriations, for the education of their youth, shall it be the stigma of the great Keystone State, that she has abandoned her system of general instruction, after having ascertained its excellencies, and the mass of her citizens have indicated, by their votes and actions, the deep interest they feel for its continuance and advancement?

Prussia, although despotic in its government, furnishes an example worthy of imitation, not only in the organization of her public schools, but also in the successful efforts made by her government and people to sustain them under the most trying circumstances. Alluding to this, Professor Stevens, in his excellent letter relating to the schools of Germany, &c., addressed to a former Superintendent, says: "Of all the nations of Europe, Prussia was reduced to the greatest extremity by the wars of Napoleon. * * * The system of confiscation went so far, that even the revenue from the endowments of schools, of poor-houses, and the funds for widows, was diverted into the treasury of France. * * * Foreign loans were made to meet the exorbitant claims of the conqueror. An army must be created, bridges re-built, ruined fortifications in every quarter repaired; and so great was the public extremity, that the Prussian ladies, with noble generosity, sent their ornaments and jewels to supply the royal treasury. Rings, crosses and other ornaments of cast-iron, were given in return to all those who had made this sacrifice. They bore the inscription, 'Ich gab gold um eisen,'—(I gave gold for iron,)—and such Spartan jewels are much treasured at this day by the possessors and their families. This state of things lasted till after the 'War of Liberation,' in 1813. But it is the pride of Prussia, that at the time of her greatest humiliation and distress, she never for a moment lost sight of the work she had begun in the improvement of her schools."

If under such circumstances the people of a monarchical government, impressed with the importance of public education, successfully sustained it, is there not great cause to believe that the free citizens of a republic will not permit much smaller difficulties to compel them to desert their system of public schools?

Since the preceding extracts were in type we have received from J. J. Barclay, Esq. the "*Twenty-seventh Annual Report of the Controllers of the Public Schools of the City and County of Philadelphia*," for the year ending June 30th, 1845—a document of 112 pages. We copy the following statistics:

Grade and number of schools.	Teachers.	Scholars.
High school, 1	11	407
Grammar, 48	161	11,058
Secondary, 21	76	5,732
Primary, 86	208	13,601
Unclassified, 78	98	5,867
Total 234	554	36,665

Of the scholars, 18,431 are girls, and 18,236 boys; and of the teachers 82 are males, and 472 females.

The aggregate expenditures for the year, amount to the sum of \$227,205 42, of which \$180,000 was raised by tax on the city and county of Philadelphia. The *annual* expense, per pupil, of the school system is \$5 67, including salaries of teachers, books, stationery, printing, Secretary's salary, office expenses; in fine, every thing but the expenditures for school-houses and furniture.

The salaries of teachers are as follows: In the High School, the Principal receives \$2,000; four Professors, each \$1,350; three Professors, each \$1,100, and three Assistants, \$650, \$250, and \$150. In Grammar Schools the male Principal receives \$900, and the female \$450; and the Assistants, (all of them females,) from \$200 to \$275. In the Secondary Schools, the Principals, (females,) receive \$350, and the Assistants \$200 to \$150. In the Primary Schools, the Principals, (all of them females,) receive \$250.

We have read with great interest the "*Report of the Principal of the High School*," (Professor John S. Hart,) for the term ending February 6th, and July 15th, 1845, which occupies nearly forty pages of the Appendix. This grade of public schools is too often regarded by many in the community with jealousy, as affording special advantages for only a few professional and wealthy families, or as educating the children of industrial classes *above* the business for which the wishes or circumstances of their parents may have destined them. To show the actual operation of the school, Professor Hart has prepared two tables, one showing the occupations of the parents and guardians of the pupils admitted to the school, and another showing the intended occupation of each pupil who leaves the school by graduation or otherwise. The 1051 pupils who have been admitted from the first opening of the school in October, 1838, to July, 1845, are registered as belonging to families representing 134 different occupations or conditions of life. Among them, there are sixty-five clerks and accountants; fifty-four carpenters; fifty-five store-keepers; sixty widows; thirty-one tailors; twenty-three inn-keepers; fourteen printers; sixteen blacksmiths; ten clergymen; thirty-four laborers;

five lawyers ; seventeen physicians ; thirteen seamstresses ; fifty-nine merchants ; fourteen machinists ; sixteen teachers ; seven stone-cutters ; thirty-three grocers, &c. The 112 pupils admitted in July, 1845, came from families representing forty-six different conditions or occupations of life. Of these forty-six, there were eleven widows : fourteen store-keepers ; seven merchants ; six grocers ; six cordwainers ; three clerks ; four carpenters ; four manufacturers ; two physicians ; one clergyman ; one baker ; one bricklayer ; one broker ; one cabinet-maker ; one cooper ; one dentist ; one lawyer ; two mariners ; one millwright ; two physicians ; two stage-drivers ; two tailors ; one victualler ; three weavers, &c. &c.

The 183 pupils who left the High School for the year ending in July 1845, are now engaged in thirty-seven different occupations. For examples, there are two bakers ; three blacksmiths ; one bookbinder ; five bricklayers ; one brickmaker ; fifteen carpenters ; fourteen clerks ; three cordwainers ; two coopers ; five druggists ; three engineers ; three engravers ; three farmers ; four grocers ; two hatters ; two iron-founders ; one jeweller ; six machinists ; four lawyers ; seven mariners ; two printers ; two sailmakers ; fifty-three storekeepers ; ten teachers ; two tinmen, &c. This table shows, that this school is not only high in its position at the head of the public schools, and as its elevated and extended course of instruction under the ablest and highest priced professors, would indicate, but that it is *public* in the best sense of the word, in as much as its advantages are open without any charge for tuition to pupils of merit, from all classes and occupations of society, who are thus well educated *for* business, and not *above* it. Prof. Hart, remarks " that the direct advantages of the school are reaped chiefly by those whose circumstances would otherwise prevent their sons from receiving a good education. I would add to the evidence furnished by this table, my own conviction derived from a personal knowledge of the pupils for the last three years, that more than three fourths of all the pupils of the High School, but for its existence, would never have had the means of acquiring more than a very moderate share of the lowest rudiments of knowledge."

This report of Prof. Hart presents the results of the examination of the applicants for admission into the school, with the name of the Grammar School to which the applicants belonged, the number admitted and rejected, from each school, thus holding up an unexceptionable standard by which the different schools can be compared.

From another table, it appears that the pupils admitted to the High

School, have come up regularly through the Primary, Secondary and Grammar Schools, and that not a few of the most successful applicants at the most recent examinations have never entered any school but the Public School.

Professor Hart during the past year has successfully organized and carried out a course of instruction for the female teachers connected with the public schools and the more advanced pupils of the girls' Grammar Schools, under the name of SATURDAY CLASSES.

The movement in reference to this matter originated in the desire shown by a large number of the female teachers of the public schools to have some means of this sort for promoting their intellectual improvement. The existence of such a desire was manifested by the fact, that a private class of the kind, which, at the request of a few of the teachers I had opened at the High School some six months previous, at the very inconvenient hours from 12 to 2 o'clock of Saturday, was thronged entirely beyond my ability to give them adequate instruction. It was believed therefore that a plan, which would give more time and more varied instruction to such of the teachers of the public schools as might desire it, would have a beneficial influence upon the general tone of public instruction. This could not be done without dispensing with the attendance of the boys on Saturday morning. It was not supposed that the number of teachers attending would exceed a hundred, or at the utmost a hundred and fifty, and this number would not give the Professors full employment. It was proposed therefore to fill up the classes by admitting a limited number of the more advanced pupils of the Girls' Grammar Schools.

We have frequently recommended something of this kind to female teachers of public schools, and to young ladies, who had left school and wished to continue their studies, and prepare themselves for the office of teaching; and for the reasons given by Professor Hart in his plan of organization.

"There can be little doubt too that where the circumstances will permit of their attendance, the course might be of essential service to the female teachers, and through them to the children with whose instruction they are charged. We would not then be presented with the singular anomaly of intelligent and well educated young women, from the date of their appointment as primary teachers, actually *retrograding* and becoming finally disqualified for promotion, by the time their age and experience entitle them to it. On the contrary, the weekly exercises on Saturday would perpetually brighten the chain of knowledge, besides adding gradually to its links. Moreover, this bringing together, periodically, the teachers from various schools, would give them invaluable opportunities, not now enjoyed, of catching improvements from each other. Experience shows that nothing is more disheartening to the teacher,—nothing serves as a more effectual damper to all her generous impulses towards improvement, than a dreary and unbroken isolation from her fellows."

The result has been, on the whole, satisfactory, though somewhat different from that anticipated. There has been less anxiety to attend than was expected from the pupils of the Girls' Grammar Schools, and a larger attendance than was expected on the part of teachers. Some, it is true, who first entered the classes, under the mistaken notion of receiving very extraordinary advantages, or without sufficiently counting the labor and self-denial necessarily connected with their deriving any advantage, soon discontinued their attendance. Yet there are many on the other hand who, against all discouragements, and through all weathers, have attended regularly throughout the year, with a degree of labor, self-denial, and spirit, worthy of all commendation.